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CHANG FU CHEN

A LITTLE CHINESE GIRL

MURRAY

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(Continued on third cover page)

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INSTRUCTOR LITERATURE SERIES

CHANG FU CHEN

A Little Chinese Girl

By
BERNICE A. H. MURRAY

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DANSVILLE, N. Y.

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Chang Fu Chen

CHANG FU CHEN

WHERE FU CHEN LIVES

Come with me for a visit to the home of a little Chinese girl, Fu Chen. Chang Fu Chen (Jong-Fu-Shen) is her full name, but the Chang part of it is the family name, her father's name being Mr. Chang.

To reach Fu Chen's home we shall have to travel many days. We will first go to some port on the Pacific Ocean, where we will take a large steamer and sail away toward the west.

After nearly three weeks on the ocean, we reach Shanghai (Shang-hi). We now have to choose between a journey by railroad or one by boat. Let us go by boat, because that trip takes longer, and will give us a better chance to see the country and the people.

Our boat is a small one, but it can be divided into rooms and made quite comfortable. There is a little deck on the front of the boat, so we will take our chairs out there where we shall be able to see everything.

We are in the part of China that is called "The Great Plain." Here we find the land level and fertile and crossed by many canals. How pretty the boats look! Some of them have bamboo sails and all of them seem full of people. In fact, we begin to wonder when we are coming to the farming country, for there are people everywhere along our route.

They crowd up to the boat whenever we stop and we pass quite near to many of the women who are washing their clothing in the water along the shore. We are told that the family washing is always done in some stream instead of in the home. The clothing is carried down to the stream and here it is pounded on the rocks and dipped and rubbed until it is clean.

There is a man in a boat with some large black birds. What can he be doing? Our boatman tells us that he is fishing and that he does it with the birds. They are cormorants, diving birds, that live on fish. All that the fisherman does is to sit in his boat and paddle out to some place where he thinks the fishing is good, and the cormorants catch fish for him. Their owner has them tied to the boat by a string which fastens around a ring on their necks. The object of the ring is to keep them from swallowing the fish which they catch.

The bird sees a fish in the water, dives down after it, comes up with the fish in his mouth, and the fisherman takes it from him. When the man has all

the fish that he wants, he slips the ring off the bird's neck and lets him fish for himself.

We pass through many small villages, and, upon inquiry, we learn that the people do not live on farms, but in villages, around which they build high clay walls. They do this to seek protection against thieves and robbers. They go out in the morning to their little farms and come back again at night.

A Fisherman and His Helpers

The land seems to be divided into large plots of ground, or beds, but we are told that one of these beds is a farm, and that a Chinese farmer can raise enough on this small piece of land to keep his family. Of course, to do this requires a great deal of care

and work, as he raises two, and sometimes three, crops in a season. If the crop is rice, he must plant it standing in water and must be careful to pump the water off at just the right time.

All of his plowing he does with a water buffalo hitched to a sort of crooked stick for a plow. The furrow that he makes is only a few inches wide, but of course, since his farm is so small, it does not take him long to plow it. The buffalo is a large, stupid-looking creature with wide, flat horns. He gets his name from his fondness for the water. On hot summer days he will always hunt a body of water and wade in until everything but the tip of his nose is covered. Sometimes boys are left sitting on his back to watch him, and then they must take care or the buffalo will run away with them into the water.

Until a few years ago the poppy was a very important crop in China, but now no one is allowed to grow it. The reason for this is that a very harmful drug is made from the poppy blossom. Men smoke this drug, which is called opium, and they are not able to do anything else, for it makes them drunk and stupid. So, several years ago, the Empress Dowager of China issued an edict that no more opium should be smoked and no more poppies should be grown.

Wheat is another crop grown on the Great Plain. The ground is plowed by the farmer with his crook-

ed stick-plow and the wheat is sowed in rows, by hand. When it is ripe, it is cut with a hand sickle and the grain is threshed by beating it against a sort of ladder or else by tramping on it. All of the farming here is quite simple, as you can see.

In the more hilly parts of the country, tea is the principal crop. It grows on the southern slopes of the hills, making them look like hills of flowers, when the plant is in bloom. The tea is grown from seed sown in the fall. In one or two years the seedlings are transplanted. About three years later the tea bush is large enough to give a small yield, which increases until the whole crop is obtained. This is usually from five to ten years after the sowing of the seed. The tea garden, when established, yields tea for fifty years or more.

After the leaves are gathered, they are dried and shipped to other countries. If you will look at the leaves in the teapot the next time you have tea, you will see the leaves as they looked when they were picked.

Cotton is raised in China, too, and its cultivation is carried on much as it is in our own country. We also notice numbers of small trees growing in rows. These, the boatman tells us, are mulberry trees, on which the silkworms feed.

The houses which we see along the way look very different from ours. They are made either of mud

or gray brick and are all only one story high. The roofs of the mud houses are made of thatch or rice straw and those of the brick houses are made of tile, with queer turned-up corners which are intended to keep out evil spirits. For the same reason there is often a screen built in front of a gateway or door. The Chinese think evil spirits cannot travel in any way but in a straight line; therefore if a door has a screen built in front, they believe the spirit can not possibly turn the corner, and enter the house.

We are coming to a city with a great high wall around it. When we are several miles away, we see high towers, and we are told that they are pagodas, or temples, but we have no time now to visit them. We will go directly to Fu Chen's home, in the city of Soochou (Soo chow), with its countless number of canals.

FU CHEN'S HOME

A canal passes near Fu Chen's house, and we have, therefore, only to step out of our boat into the court-yard of her home. It is a square yard and there are doors leading into rooms on every side, for not only do Fu Chen and her family live here, but also her father's mother and father and all of his brothers and their families.

We notice that when Fu Chen greets us she shakes her own hands instead of taking ours, so let us try

Chinese Houses Are Very Different from Ours

to be polite and do as she does. She asks us if we have eaten rice, and we must answer "Yes." That is the way people say "How-do-you-do" in China.

When we ask Fu Chen how many there are in her family and she tells us thirty-four, we understand that she means all who live together with their doors opening out into the same yard. "But," you say, "what a queer yard!" There is no grass in it, but see what a pretty pomegranate tree is growing here. It has glossy green leaves and bright red flowers. There is a fig tree, too, and over in one corner is a flower bed that Fu Chen cares for herself. In the springtime she has poppies and azalias; during the summer, roses; and in the autumn, pretty chrysanthemums.

The house in which Fu Chen lives is made of gray brick. The windows of the house are square, with a latticework of wood, over which paper is pasted. At house-cleaning time, there are no windows to wash. Fu Chen's mother merely tears off the soiled paper and pastes fresh paper in its place.

The doors are of wood and hang on wooden hinges. They swing inward and at night are closed by a big wooden bar which fits into grooves at the sides of the door.

Let us step inside. The floor is of earth, for you must remember that wood is very expensive. Did you not notice, as we came through the country, that

there were no forests, and only very few groves of trees? That is the reason why there are no houses here built of wood.

At the end of the room is a sort of shelf that is used as a sideboard; in the middle are a table and several chairs. Against the wall are some boxes or chests covered with pigskin, and at one side is a door leading into an inner room.

In this room are a table and a stool. Several low shelves along the side of the wall and all of one end of the room are taken up with a big bed. At least we are told that it is a bed. It is a framework about a foot high, having strong ropes stretched across and high posts at each corner. In summer a mosquito netting is stretched from the posts over the bed, for the mosquitoes here are so troublesome that no one can sleep without a covering. The shelves at the sides are used for beds, too, but all of the bed clothing is put away in the chests during the day.

This is Fu Chen's home. "But," you say, "where is the kitchen?" Did you notice a low vessel made of clay just outside the door? That is the only stove the family has, and the cooking is all done out of doors. There is a thin iron pan that fits over the stove and only one thing can be cooked at a time. Fu Chen's mother always sends to a hot water shop for hot water to make tea. The meal usually consists of only one dish. It may be a porridge of millet,

or hot cakes, or a dish made of red peppers and eaten with wheat bread; but more often it is rice—and how good it tastes if a handful of greens, or a fish, or a bit of meat is cooked with it.

Does Fu Chen's home seem poor to you? It is really a very good home, according to Chinese standards, for there are many in China who have nothing but one bare room with a few rags for bedding. Fu Chen is proud of her home, but she will tell us that she is honored that we are interested in her poor, mean abode. That is the Chinese way of being polite.

We arrive just in time for the morning meal, which is usually served about ten o'clock. We are asked to eat with the family, and of course we accept. All of the men sit at one table and the women at another. The tables are much like our own, and we have chairs on which to sit. As Fu Chen was expecting us quite a feast has been prepared for us.

There is no tablecloth, but the tables are of beautiful wood, and a cloth would seem out of place. There are a number of small dishes on the tables, and we find they contain such delicacies as watermelon seeds, peanuts, candy made of sesame seeds, candied walnut meats, and beautiful blocks of red jelly, made from haws. These things are placed there for us to eat between courses, and I am sure you will like every one of them.

At each place is a pair of black sticks, called chopsticks, and we are told that we must eat with these. We take our food, a little at a time, on a small plate no larger than a saucer. We have a porcelain spoon which we can use when the food is a liquid, but everything else we eat with the chopsticks.

We are first served with a cup of tea. The cup, we notice, is larger at the top than at the bottom and, unlike ours, has no saucer or handle but a cover, which holds the "draw," or steeped tea leaves. You see, in making the tea, the Chinese put the tea leaves in the cup and then pour hot water over them; a cover has to be used on the cup, therefore, to keep the leaves out of the drink.

Chinese Men Eating with Chopsticks

We have roast duck, but the only part we eat is the skin, which has been roasted a delicate brown. We are served with a bread that is in the form of pancakes, but very thin. We follow the example set by our hosts and wrap the skin up in this bread, first adding a kind of sauce, and we eat it by holding it in our fingers. How good it tastes!

We also have fish cooked in a very palatable man-

ner and served with a sauce; greens dipped in batter and fried in oil; rice cooked with dates; and the state dish of all feasts, sharks' fins. These last are very tough we think.

There is no butter and no sugar or cream for our tea. The last course is lotos stewed in sugar, preserved ginger, mandarin oranges, and a delicious pastry filled with apricot preserves. This is a very fine feast, indeed, and you must not think that Fu Chen has so much every day. It is only when she has company that such a variety is served.

While we are eating, let us look at our little Chinese sister and learn something about her customs and see how her manner of dressing differs from ours.

HOW FU CHEN LOOKS

Fu Chen's skin is darker than ours— a sort of yellow—but it is pretty with her snappy black eyes and straight black hair. China is sometimes called the "Land of the Black-Haired People," for everyone has black hair and eyes.

Fu Chen has a white powder all over her face, and her lips are painted red, as she is dressed for company. Her hair is combed straight back from her forehead and plaited in a braid, which hangs down her back. Sometimes when she works, she twists the braid into a knot on the back of her head.

She is dressed to-day in pink. She wears a sort of loose jacket that comes halfway to her knees, and short, wide trousers which hang loose like a divided skirt.

The houses are not heated in winter because of the scarcity of fuel, so, when it is cold, she puts on more garments, until she sometimes is wearing four or five suits. Her winter clothes are padded, too, so that when she gets them all on she looks much larger than she does now. For everyday she wears a dark blue coarse cloth. She has a few silk garments, too, but she does not often wear them. Some Chinese girls, whose fathers are wealthy, wear silks and satins every day; and in the winter, instead of wearing padded clothing, they have coats lined with fur.

Fu Chen has on a pair of cotton shoes which she made herself. She also has a pair of beautiful satin shoes elaborately embroidered in silk. These she wears only when she dons her other silk garments. Her feet are small and we can see that it hurts her to walk, but she is very proud of her "lily feet."

When Fu Chen was six years old her mother began to bind her little girl's feet by wrapping them tightly in a bandage. Occasionally she undid the bandage, only to draw it tighter. The result is that Fu Chen's feet are now only four inches long and will never grow any larger. Of course this binding of her feet hurt Fu Chen and many nights she cried

herself to sleep; but when she is to be married, having little feet will help her, more than anything else, to get a desirable husband.

For centuries the Chinese have bound the feet of their little girls in this way. Some years ago, however, through the influence of foreigners, an "Anti-Foot-Binding League" was formed and we are happy to say that many of the more modern Chinese are giving up this cruel custom.

Fu Chen wears rings in her ears and bracelets on her arms. She is very proud of her jewelry, and when she is a little older she will wear ornaments in her hair. Even now, on holidays, she wears artificial flowers in her hair and over her ears.

She always carries a fan in summer time. In fact, she has several fans. One of them has red feathers at the top, and it is very pretty when Fu Chen gracefully waves it back and forth. She has another fan of bamboo sticks covered with paper on which pretty flowers are painted. She uses her fan to shade her eyes, too, when she goes out in the hot sun, for she never wears a hat, and very few people in China have learned to carry parasols.

When it rains, she has an umbrella which is made of ribs of bamboo placed close together and covered with oiled paper. It is a very clumsy affair and much too heavy for a little girl to carry; besides, it has a disagreeable odor when it is kept in the house.

I am sure you would all prefer your own umbrellas.

Fu Chen has three brothers, and I know the boys want to learn something about them.

FU CHEN'S BROTHERS

Fu Chen's oldest brother, who is fifteen, thinks himself quite a man. He attends the government school and comes home only twice every month, although the school is but a short distance away. He looks different from the way we have always imagined Chinese boys look; we notice that his braid, or queue, has been cut off, that he combs his hair as an American boy does, and that he wears a cap which looks very much like an American boy's. A few years ago Chinese boys had their hair braided in a long queue or pigtail and wore little round black caps having a button on top.

From our conversation with young Mr. Chang we learn that there has been a revolution in China and that the nation which at one time was ruled by an emperor, has since 1912, been a republic ruled by a president. The Republic ordered all men to cut off their queues and the boys in the government schools were among the first to obey this new ruling. There are still some Chinese men, however, especially the coolies, or laborers, who continue to wear queues. A law in China generally means only that the rulers *hope* the people will do as they are asked, not that

the thing forbidden is stopped; hence, many, in spite of the law, still cling to the old custom of wearing the queue.

Young Mr. Chang also tells us that there are nearly three hundred boys in his school, who come from all parts of the province. There are eighteen provinces in China, each corresponding to one of our states, only much larger. The boys are divided into groups or classes, and each group has a teacher who is in charge all the time. They get up in the morning about five o'clock and go at once to their schoolroom. About eight o'clock they have a cup of tea, and at ten o'clock they eat their breakfast, which usually consists of some sort of porridge eaten without sugar or cream, bread, and tea.

After this meal they go back to their books again, and during the long afternoon they study, with only a little time for another cup of tea in the middle of the afternoon. If we should pass near the door we should hear a great noise, for all study aloud. That has been the way that Chinese boys have studied for years. At five or six o'clock they have their evening meal and then they study again until nine o'clock, when they go to bed.

"But," you say, "is there no time for play?" Very little, for it is the boys' business just now to get an education, and play is not a part of their plan. Since the Chinese have no weekly day of rest like our Sun-

day, the boys study seven days a week. They do have a half-holiday twice a month, however, on the first and the fifteenth. Their vacation is just two weeks long and it comes in the winter at their New Year's season, which is soon after our Christmas. Now, do you not think that American boys are fortunate, after all?

The principal subjects in the school are the Chinese classics, which they are required to commit to memory. Whole books are learned in this way, and if a mistake of one word is made, the teacher strikes the poor boy on the hand with a ruler and he is told to take his seat and study harder. No helping over hard places and no second trial with a Chinese teacher! In the last few years the study of arithmetic, geography, and history has been introduced into the Chinese schools, but most of the teachers still think that the classics are by far the most important things to be taught.

Just before breakfast, and again before the evening meal, the boys are drilled in the school yard. They form in columns and use the high German step, which consists in lifting the foot almost to the knee with a swinging motion. This gives the boys plenty of exercise and they enjoy it, especially when they sing some national song.

Fu Chen is rather afraid of this big brother of hers, for she scarcely knows him, he is home so little;

but the brother of her own age, only a year older, is her playmate, and such good times as they have together! His name is Shao Mu (Shaw Mu), which means Little Wood. He still wears a queue and his head is shaved about halfway back. He has such a bright, laughing happy face that I am sure he has many friends.

He wears a sort of little jacket that comes just below his waist, and loose trousers. Both are made of a dark blue cotton material. His sleeves are long, and in winter he draws them down over his hands to keep them warm. He goes to school, too, but he boards at home and he does not have to study so long as his older brother. He finds plenty of time to play with Fu Chen and to tease her, too, just as American brothers do.

Shao Mu

Fu Chen also has a baby brother. He looks like a girl. He has an earring in one of his ears, and when we ask Fu Chen about it, she laughs and says that it is to fool the gods. Her mother put the ring in the baby's ear to make the gods think that he was a girl. As girls are not so desirable in Chinese fami-

lies as boys, the gods will not want the baby, she believes, and so they will let him live. The Chinese must think their gods are very stupid, to be fooled in this way.

Although boy babies are thought more desirable than girl babies by the Chinese, if there are several

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Chinese Mothers and Babies

sons the parents are very much pleased when they have a girl. When Fu Chen came, her parents were very proud of her, and she has been the pet of the household ever since.

Sometimes Fu Chen is allowed to go with her brother to school, but only for a short time. When

she is there, she is very quiet, for she is afraid of the schoolmaster with his ruler and long bamboo stick. When Shao Mu recites, he gives his book to the teacher, turns his back, and says his lesson as fast as he can. The faster he says it the better he knows it, the teacher thinks. It may mean nothing to him, he may not even understand the words, but if he can say it, that is all that is necessary.

Shao Mu has a very sad time of it at school, for he is full of mischief and does not always study as hard as he should, so, of course, he is often punished. When he is a little older, we hope he will do better.

Of course, you want to know what the children play, so let us ask Fu Chen to play with us. She begins to mark off a place on the ground and we say "Oh, we know that game, it is Hop-Scotch," and sure enough, we find that we can play with her, for she plays the game exactly as we do. Then she brings out a feather which we blow around, and the one who lets it touch the ground loses the game. That is great fun, and we grow very excited trying not to let it fall when it comes near us.

There are some games that she plays with cards, too, like our game of Authors, and there are many games of tag which she knows. Besides having very good times playing these games, our little Chinese friends often enjoy seeing a street show given by a magician who comes into the village dur-

ing the summer, as do the hurdy-gurdy man and organ grinder in our country.

THE STREET MAGICIAN

Shao Mu comes into the yard very much excited and tells us that a magician, or sleight of hand performer, is outside. We offer him a few cents and he is very glad to come inside and give his show for us. He has a very small bundle in his hands. This he carefully unwraps and spreads down on the ground a sort of mat. A handful of beans, a number of Chinese teacups, a few boxes, some flower pots, and several pans compose his stock in trade.

All the time that he is arranging these things he keeps up a constant flow of conversation. After he has the objects placed to his satisfaction, he makes a speech, telling us what he is going to do. He turns his hands to show us that he has nothing in them, rubs them together a few times and produces a "cash," or copper coin. He appears as much astonished as we are. He snaps his fingers and it disappears. He opens his hands to show us they are empty, snaps his fingers again, and there are two coins! He keeps this up until he has fully twenty coins, and we cannot discover where they came from, so cleverly has he performed the trick.

He picks up his fan to use it and appears very much astonished to find that every rib is torn. He

looks at it, turns it over, closes it and presses very hard. When he opens it, we are surprised to find it perfect again. He then takes three beans and three teacups and, apparently without lifting the cups, places one bean under each cup. When he uncovers them, we see all three beans under one cup.

He juggles the cups and the beans, takes up the fans and juggles them, too, until he has five or six objects in the air at once. He takes up his flower pots, and plants grow in them right before our eyes.

He next passes a small empty bowl among us. We see plainly that there is nothing in it. He then places over it another bowl, covers all with a handkerchief, says a few words and waves his fan over it, uncovers it, and there are three little fish swimming around in a bowl of water. All through his performance he uses his fan as a wand, and we begin to think it must be a very powerful one, indeed.

His last trick seems the most wonderful of all. He carefully unwraps a package of dirt. He then takes a bowl of water and a handful of dirt which he picks up in the yard and shows us that it soon makes the water muddy. Next, he takes his magic dirt, as he calls it, and another bowl of clean water. He puts the dirt into the water with his hand, draws out his hand, pours off the water, and there is the sand as dry as ever on the bottom of the bowl. He has really used a special sand for this trick.

Fu Chen and Shao Mu, seeing that we are entertained by the magician, offer to call a man who has wonderful trained mice. He keeps his mice in a little cage, and what funny little things they are! They are brown, having three black stripes down their backs, and very short tails. They look quite like our chipmunks.

Their owner has a regular performance which they have been taught to give. On a trapeze outfit the mice swing from one ring to another and catch one another, very much as trapeze performers do in a circus. They climb a pole, walk a rope and play together on a little merry-go-round; they swing and dance and do all sorts of clever tricks. It is wonderful to see the tiny little creatures knowing just what to do next. It must have taken a great deal of patience to train them, but the Chinese are very patient in everything they do.

Would you like to take a journey down to the business part of the town? Fu Chen would like to take us, for she seldom gets away from home.

A SHOPPING TOUR

As we are tired of traveling by boat we look about for some kind of vehicle in which to ride. The rich ride in chairs, while the poor use wheelbarrows. I am afraid we should find the wheelbarrows very rough and jolty, so we will take a chair.

We signal to a group of chair bearers and engage them to take us to the shopping district. Our chair looks very much like a cushioned and curtained box, with doors and windows. The top resembles a Chinese roof and the outside is finished with gilded wood and colored felt.

It is very easy to ride in the chair for a short dis-

The Rich Ride in Chairs

tance. The men go swinging along, and we find the motion quite pleasant. Our chair bearers, or coolies, call to the people on the streets to get out of their way, and they have a set of signals which the one in advance uses to tell those in the rear when to step up, when to step down, and when they are going to turn a corner.

The streets are narrow and dark, for the roofs of the shops almost touch. What queer-looking shops! Most of them have nothing in sight to show what they have to sell. We see what looks like an empty room with several clerks standing around. The side toward the street is open, so we will go in.

We are told that this is a jewelry shop, but we need not expect to see all the things that the proprietor has to sell, for he will show us only what we ask to see. He has no idea of trying to make us buy something that we do not want or of displaying his wares in an attractive manner. He supposes we know exactly what we want.

We ask to see gold rings and he shows us some. But how curiously they are made! The ends are not joined, but lap over each other, so that the rings can be made larger or smaller, according to the size of the owner's finger. The ones without stones are engraved with dragons or heads of beasts, and on many of them are the Chinese characters meaning happiness. Some of the rings are set with jade, a very precious stone, and with pearls; all of them are heavy but beautiful. The work of making the rings is all done by hand and the purest of gold and silver is used. If we wish, we may have our name engraved in Chinese on any ring which we buy.

We next ask to see some bracelets. These we find quite heavy, too, and inlaid with jewels, many of

them being very expensive. The beads we enjoy looking at, also. They are in long strands, often double, and always expensive. The officials wear them on many occasions. The more expensive strings have a few beads, and perhaps all of them, of jade. This makes them very expensive, and only the very rich can afford to wear them. It seems funny to us to see a high official with several strands of beads around his neck so that they jingle when he rides along in his chair. We have never before seen a man wearing beads!

As there are no department stores in the native Chinese cities, we must go to a different shop for each purchase. Let us go to a fur store next.

Soochou is the greatest fur market in China. The furs are brought here from Tibet and Siberia. Those that are tanned one winter reach Soochou just in time for the next winter's trade. The animals are caught during the long winter and the skins tanned. There are beautiful white furs, brown mink, and Siberian gray squirrel. The next spring, they are started on their long journey to the city. The trapper takes them by cart to the nearest town, where he sells them. The trader sells them to another man, who takes a cartload to a farther trading post on the edge of the Desert of Gobi. Here he hires a camel, or several camels, if his load is a big one, and starts across the desert. He travels many

days, until both he and the faithful camels are very tired. He finally reaches the most southern point to which the camels can go.

Here he rests several days, then hires a cart and starts on the next stage of his journey. The camels rest, too, and their driver waits until he can get some one who wants to go back with him. After five days in a cart, the man with the load of furs reaches the Grand Canal and hires a boat. The rest of his journey is easy, for he keeps the same boat until he arrives at Soochou.

It is a hot day in July when he reaches his destination, and he has been on the way several months. After much quarreling and argument about price, he sells all of his furs to a shopkeeper. The shopkeeper matches the different pelts or hides and has them made up into garments. Most of the fur used in China is made up into linings for the beautiful silk and satin garments worn by wealthy Chinese.

Since we have learned of the long, hard journey necessary to bring the furs to market, we should expect to find them very expensive, but a large garment big enough to line an overcoat for a man, or a coat for a lady, can be bought for ten or fifteen dollars.

We know that Soochou is not only a great market for furs, but it is the greatest silk market in the world, so we want to visit a shop where silk is sold.

Our chair coolies take us to the largest silk shop in Soochou, but there is nothing that would tell us what is sold here. It is even more dingy than the other shops that we have seen. The proprietor comes out to wait on us and we cannot tell him that we are "just looking"; we must ask for the kind of silk and the color that we wish to see.

Since there are a number of us, we can ask for different kinds and different colors of silk, so that we will see a great many pieces. They are all rolled up very neatly, wrapped in paper, and tied. On each piece is a tag telling the cost of the roll, and every time we ask what the price is per yard, the storekeeper has to get out his little counting board and figure it up.

We ask to see the silk brocades, the most beautiful and the most expensive silks in the shop. We are taken to a small back room where the very finest silks are kept. Here the shopkeeper seems delighted when he sees how much we appreciate his silks. They are the pride of his heart and he loves them as a miser loves his gold. Each of us asks for a different color, so we see a number of bolts before we leave.

They are all woven on hand looms, and the greatest care and skill have been used to make them the beautiful product which we so much admire. The designs are of such beauty that they seem to stand

up from the background. Flowers form the most common designs, but we find some of birds and dragons as well as a few conventional patterns.

The shopkeeper has a wonderful stock. Some of his silks are so fine that they could be drawn through a ring, and others are so stiff with gold thread that they could stand alone. We find here many things that we want and we discover that the prices are very reasonable too.

Next door is a china store, and of course we want to go there, for we know that in this country the very first dishes in the world were made. That is the reason we call our dishes *chinaware*. Here are shelves upon shelves of dishes of all sorts.

We especially admire the beautiful vases for sale here, and as we are seated at a table, the shopkeeper brings many for us to see. The more costly vases are kept put away, but he gladly gets them out and shows them to us. We look at vases that he tells us are four and five hundred years old. Many of them have very curious figures painted on them. Some show warriors going out to battle on very fierce-looking steeds and with shields and bows and arrows in their hands. Others represent beautiful ladies—beautiful from the Chinese point of view—doing all sorts of impossible things and standing in the most distorted attitudes. Some of the vases are decorated with dragons and some with flowers.

Many of them come from Kiukiang (Ku ki-ang), a city on the Yantze (Yang-see) River where a great deal of pottery is made.

Our time is nearly up and we must go back to Fu Chen's home to bid her good-by. We have learned many things from our little Chinese cousin and we are sorry to leave her. The last thing we see is her head bobbing up and down in the gateway as she shakes her hands bidding us good-by and wishing us happiness.

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